AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the paragraph on page 7, lines 1-5 of the original specification with the following amended paragraph:

"In general, a loop comprises a prolog, a loop-body and an epilog. The prolog and epilog instructions are generally a subset of the instructions in the <u>body of the</u> loop. The prolog instructions are placed at the start of the loop, before the loop body and are used for priming the pipeline. The epilog instructions are placed at the end of the loop, after the loop body and are used for draining the pipeline. According to the present invention, mechanisms are provided to guard the execution (committing of results) to the correct subset of the loop-body. Consequently, the data path can repeatedly execute the loop-body, thereby eliminating the prolog and epilog code."